

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1397

S E C R E T ATHENS 9016

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, PFOR, GR, US

SUBJECT: US-GREEK BASE NEGOTIATIONS: TATOI

REF: STATE 273420

1. CALOGERAS RECENTLY INDICATED TO STEARNS THAT GREEK SIDE WISHED TO RAISE SUBJECT OF TATOI IN THIRD PLENARY ROUND. STEARNS REPLIED THAT US SIDE CONTINUED TO BELIEVE THAT ATO COMMUNICATIONS SITE AT TATOI WAS NOT REPEAT NOT AN APPROPRIATE SUBJECT TO DISCUSS WITHIN CONTEXT OF US-GREEK NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY FACILITIES AND AGREEMENTS. HE REMINDED CALOGERAS THAT AMBASSADOR KUBISCH HAD STILL NOT RECEIVED ANY INDICATION FROM FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS AS TO WHETHER GOG WAS WILLING TO RECONSIDER ITS POSITION THAT ATO FACILITIES BE MOVE FROM TATOI TO NEA MAKRI. THUS, IT SEEMED TO STEARNS THAT BEST CHANNEL FOR DISCUSSIONS ON TATOI WAS FROM FOREIGN MINISTER TO AMBASSADOR AND THAT BALL REMAINED IN GREEK COURT.

2. CALOGERAS SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD BITSIOS HAD DISCUSSED TATOI AGAIN WITH CARAMANLIS BUT THAT PRIME MINISTER STILL INSISTED THAT FACILITY BE MOVED TO NEA MAKRI. CALOGERAS SAW NO INDICATION THAT GOG WOULD BE WILLING TO PERMIT CONTINUATION OF FACILITY AT TATO BEYOND EXPIRATION DATE OF CURRENT LEASE WHICH WAS MAY 1977. IN FACT, SAID CALOGERAS, BITSIOS HAD INDICATED TO HIM THAT GOG POSITION WAS THAT MOVE TO NEA MAKRI SHOULD OCCUR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND

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PREFERABLY BEFORE JULY 1, 1976.

3. STEARNS OBSERVED THAT THIS WAS IMPOSSIBLE FROM TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL STANDPOINT. WE WOULD WISH TO HAVE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO POINT OUT TO THE GREEK GOVERNMENT THE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN ANY MOVE FROM TATOI. STEARNS SUGGESTED THAT BITSIOS DISCUSS SUBJECT WITH AMBASSADOR, ENABLING US TO SEEK FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS FROM WASHINGTON ON HOW TO PROCEED IN RESOLVING WHAT APPEARED IN US EYES, TO BE AN UNNECESSARY PROBLEM.

4. CALOGERAS SAID THAT HE WOULD INFORM BITSIOS OF OUR POSITION AND THOUGHT THAT FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD FOLLOW THROUGH WITH AMBASSADOR IN NEAR FUTURE. HE WOULD RESERVE RIGHT HOWEVER TO RAISE TATOI IN THIRD PLENARY IF ISSUE HAD NOT BEEN RESOLVED BY THEN. STEARNS REPLIED THAT GREEK SIDE COULD OF COURSE RAISE ANY SUBJECT IT WISHED IN THIRD PLENARY BUT THAT US SIDE WOULD RESERVE RIGHT TO RESPOND THAT IT PREFERRED TO DISCUSS TATOI OUTSIDE THE CONTEXT OF THE MILITARY BASE NEGOTIATIONS.

5. COMMENT: WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE SPECIAL PROBLEMS CREATED BY COG'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE ATO FACILITY AT TATOI ARE BEST ADDRESSED OUTSIDE OF THE THIRD PLENARY. THIS IS NOT REPEAT NOT A MILITARY FACILITY AND TO PERMIT THE GREEKS TO REAT IT AS ONE DEPRIVES US OF SOME FLEXIBILITY. WE WILL SEE HOW BITSIOS EXPRESSES THE GREEK POSITION TO THE AMBASSADOR AND WILL THEN GIVE THE DEPARTMENT OUR RECOMMENDATION ON HOW TO PROCEED. HOWEVER, ALL THE SIGNS ARE THAT THE GOG HAS MADE A FIRM AND UNCOMPROMISING DECISION AGAINST OUR CONTINUING AT TATOI, AND WE SHOULD THEREFORE REACTIVATE OUR CONTINGENCY PLANNING.
KUBISCH

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